

TO PROCLAIM PEACE

Religious Statements on the Arms Race

This booklet is a compilation of statements addressing the issues of peace and disarmament issued by major American and international religious groups. The documents are contemporary as of 1981, though we have also included some earlier statements that express the standing positions of religious bodies.

The Fellowship of Reconciliation, an ecumenical pacifist organization, publishes these documents—declarations of concern, inspiration, challenge and hope—as a resource for the growing effort against the arms race and a spur to action.

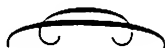
The FOR, founded in 1914, has national chapters in over twenty-five countries. Its members, coming from a variety of religious traditions, share a common commitment to nonviolence and have joined together to explore the power of love and truth for resolving human conflict. Write to FOR, Membership Department (Box 271, Nyack, NY 10960) for information on how you can join.

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American Baptist Churches

*From "Resolution on Disarmament"
adopted by the General Board, 1978:*

As Christians we believe that armaments and military force are inconsistent with the ways of Jesus Christ and the biblical hope of justice and peace. We seek to convert armaments into implements that affirm life rather than deny it.

The international arms race continues to escalate, threatening world peace, diverting limited resources essential for meeting human needs and distorting the world's economies . . .

We take this opportunity during the Special Session on Disarmament to reaffirm our support of the United Nations and its crucial role in the maintenance of peace in our world, to support disarmament and to encourage the bilateral efforts by US/USSR to limit arms now underway in SALT II.

THEREFORE, the General Board of the American Baptist Churches, USA:

- Registers its strong support of the Special Session on Disarmament of the United Nations General Assembly and recommends to American Baptist Churches their prayerful support for the work of the Special Session.
- Communicates to churches in this country and other nations its convictions that disarmament is a goal requiring the cooperation and efforts of Christians everywhere and urging them to join in prayerful concern and support of the Special Session . . . and continuing education and action toward a peaceful and disarmed world . . .
- Calls upon the United States Government to work tirelessly for a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and substantial progress on SALT II as a fitting accompaniment to the Special Session on Disarmament.
- Urges the US Administration to take the initiative encouraging all nations to supplement disarmament and arms control negotiations with restraint on weapons development and arms sales, and reduction of the amount of national budget devoted to military hardware and support of the armed forces.
- Calls upon American Baptists in light of our Christian vocation as peacemakers to confess that we as Christians have not been serious enough in our work for disarmament, and to urge that in our congregations and program boards we commit ourselves to pray steadfastly for peace and disarmament, allocate more resources to education and action on the disarmament agenda.

WHEREAS, the United States military budget is being increased at a time when programs for human resources (education, employment, health-care, adequate nutrition) and physical resources (land use, environment, community development) are being reduced; and

WHEREAS, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) over the years in International Convention and General Assembly actions has strongly stated its opposition to war as a method of settling disputes between nations, and has called into question the nuclear arms race and high military expenditures to develop systems of death and destruction, thus diverting energies and funds from domestic and foreign programs for humanitarian, life-giving purposes; . . .

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) meeting in St. Louis, Missouri October 25-31, 1979 call upon President Carter and the Congress of the United States:

1. to question the role of the United States as the world's largest producer and exporter of arms and to intensify their efforts to reverse the dangerous and burdensome arms race;
2. to pursue with urgency a comprehensive ban on nuclear testing and effective limitations on the development, production, and sale of arms;
3. to seek seriously the development of peaceful ways to resolve conflicts between nations and to plan expeditiously for conversion to a healthy economy based on production for non-military purposes.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the General Assembly suggest that the members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), recognizing the possibility of cataclysmic destruction,

1. request materials from the Division of Homeland Ministries and undertake the responsibility of becoming more informed about the issues;
2. consider joining Disciples Peace Fellowship, a fellowship of members of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) who reject war as a method of settling international disputes and work together toward the elimination of war and the creation of conditions of peace among people and nations; and
3. set about, in their congregations and communities, the essential task of seeking imaginative and reconciling ways to improve the human condition in a world of peace.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Division of Homeland Ministries, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), 222 South Downey Avenue, Box 1986,
Indianapolis, IN 46206

Disciples Peace Fellowship, Box 1986, Indianapolis, IN 46206

Church of the Brethren

*From a resolution adopted by the
Church of the Brethren Annual Conference, 1980:*

Times of crisis in the life of the religious community often create landmarks along the pilgrimage of faith . . .

Events and tensions at the outset of the new decade point up that this is also a time of crisis. Ever greater quantities of national and global resources are being diverted into an increasingly more devastating war machine. Hope for justice and peace becomes more remote. Those persons who are least able to bring about change -- the poor, the aged, the young -- are suffering the most.

. . . We also join our voice with those who call for a nuclear moratorium and cry out "Enough." Yet we recognize how limited this action would be since the current nuclear overkill capacity of ten or twenty or more times is already too much.

To break this mad cycle we call for bold and creative initiatives such as a unilateral decision by our government to terminate all nuclear tests and the production of all nuclear weapons and their delivery systems. In turn, we appeal to the Soviet Union to reciprocate in order to halt the rush toward a nuclear holocaust.

. . . We find our security in God, not in weapons, and would point those around us to that security.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Church of the Brethren General Offices, 1451 Dundee Avenue,
Elgin, IL 60120
Brethren Peace Fellowship, Box 145, New Windsor, MD 21776

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (Mormons)

*From "The Christmas Message" of President Spencer W. Kimball
and the First Presidency, 1980:*

At this holy season we extend our love and a special greeting to all people everywhere. Christmas means a solemn mood and a sacred feeling blending with an air of joyful celebration, to elevate the spirit and promote good will.

The reason for such warmth of emotion is the spirit of the Savior,

the Lord Jesus Christ, whose birth we commemorate at this season. He came to earth as the Son of God, the Prince of Peace. To the degree that men have put his gospel into their lives they have partaken of the peace which he came to bring. But as we contemplate his birth, and reflect on the words of the angelic chorus, we are dismayed by the growing tensions among the nations, and the unrestricted building of arsenals of war, including huge and threatening nuclear weaponry. Nuclear war, when unleashed on a scale for which the nations are preparing, spares no living thing within the perimeter of its initial destructive force, and sears and maims and kills wherever its pervasive cloud reaches.

While recognizing the need for strength to repel any aggressor, we are enjoined by the word of God to "renounce war and proclaim peace." We call upon the heads of nations to sit down and reason together in good faith to resolve their differences. If men of good will can bring themselves to do so, they may save the world from a holocaust, the depth and breadth of which can scarcely be imagined. We are confident that when there is enough of a desire for peace and a will to bring it about, it is not beyond the possibility of attainment. . .

From the Easter message of the First Presidency, 1981:

As we witness the increasing tensions among the peoples of the earth, with a constant escalation of arms, including the building of huge arsenals of nuclear weaponry in our land, we feel a deep and growing concern. We deplore the use of nuclear weapons with their terrible potential for the destruction of life, property, and even of civilization itself.

From the Statement of the First Presidency on the MX missile, 1981:

Its planners state that the system is strictly defensive in concept, and that the chances are extremely remote that it will ever be actually employed. However, history indicates that men have seldom created armaments that eventually were not put to use.

We are most gravely concerned over the proposed concentration in a relatively restricted area of the West. Our feelings would be the same about concentration in any part of the nation, just as we assume those in any other area so selected would have similar feelings. With such concentration, one segment of the population would bear a highly disproportionate share of the burden, in lives lost and property destroyed, in case of an attack, particularly if such were to be a saturation attack . . .

Our fathers came to this western area to establish a base from which to carry the gospel of peace to the people of the earth. It is ironic, and a denial of the very essence of that gospel, that in this same general area there should be constructed a mammoth weapons system potentially capable of destroying much of civilization.

Episcopal Church

"Christian Attitudes to War in a Nuclear Age", statement of the Primates of the Anglican Communion, 1981:

The church in former ages justified war in certain circumstances by recourse to the theory of the 'just war'. This theory war never intended to commend war, but to limit its frequency. There have always been Christians who repudiated any legitimising of war. Today many others would join them believing that the very conditions for a just war themselves condemn not only the actual use of nuclear weapons, but also their possession as a deterrent.

Whilst justifying the legitimacy of such a unilateralist pacifist position, not all of us believe that the Church corporately ever has adopted or is likely to adopt such a stance. This does not mean that we are either indifferent or uncommitted. We strongly identify with the Final Document of the United Nations Special Assembly Session on Disarmament of 1978, especially when it calls for a comprehensive nuclear test ban; a halt to conventional arms procurement and trade; the development of an alternative system of security to the accumulation of weaponry and the mobilization of public opinion to counteract the armament race. We also strongly commend the proposal by Dr. Kurt Waldheim, the U.N. Secretary General, that all national governments set aside 0.1% of their defense budgets for disarmament research and education.

We pledge ourselves to work for multilateral disarmament, and to support those who seek, by education and other appropriate means, to influence those people and agencies who shape nuclear policy. In particular we believe that the SALT talks must be resumed and pursued with determination.

The Archbishop of Canterbury in a speech in Washington said: "We have made a great advance in technology without a corresponding advance in moral sense. We are capable of unbinding the forces which lie at the heart of creation and of destroying our civilization . . . It is vital that we see modern weapons of war for what they are - evidence of madness." As Christians we recognize a demonic element in the complexity of our world, but we also affirm our belief in the good will and purpose and Providence of God for his whole creation. This requires us to work for a world characterized not by fear, but by mutual trust and justice.

"MANKIND IS CONFRONTED BY A CHOICE: WE MUST HALT THE ARMS RACE AND PROCEED TO DISARMAMENT, OR FACE ANNIHILATION." (Final Document of the UNSSD)

From the "Pastoral Letter," House of Bishops, 1980:

Since nuclear armaments here and in the Soviet Union have created a world in which the whole can nowhere be protected against its

parts, our own national security has reached the zero point. The issue is no longer the survival of one nation against another. We stand now in mortal danger of global human incineration.

Statement on the arms race signed by 60 US Episcopal bishops, 1980:

We, the undersigned bishops of the Episcopal Church in the United States of America:

BELIEVING that war is contradictory to and inconsistent with the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ who calls us to be peacemakers, and **REAFFIRMING** all the statements about war, peace, and violence in the past century by the General Convention, House of Bishops, and Lambeth Conference, and

OBSERVING the Faustian proportion of the international arms race, and the paralyzing effects -- personal and economic -- resulting from the fear in which it is based, and

QUESTIONING the validity of the theory of mutual deterrence which underlies the nuclear arms race, hereby

JOIN other persons throughout this nation who are requesting the President of the United States to propose to the Soviet Union a mutual nuclear weapons moratorium by which the United States and the Soviet Union agree to halt immediately the testing, production, and further deployment of all nuclear warheads, missiles, and delivery systems.

Resolution of the General Convention, 1976:

WHEREAS, Today all mankind lies under the threat of nuclear destruction, and

WHEREAS, The devastation possible through even limited use of nuclear weapons is incalculable; and

WHEREAS, The U.S. having led in the development of nuclear power should also lead in its effective utilization and control; therefore be it

RESOLVED, The General Convention of 1976 commend the efforts made at the SALT talks to limit the number of nuclear weapons and delivery systems in the arsenal of the major powers; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the General Convention express its hope for a time when we may end our dependence on the use of nuclear weapons as a deterrent to war and may use nuclear power exclusively for peaceful purposes.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Episcopal Peace Fellowship, Hearst Hall (Room 232), Wisconsin Avenue and Woodley Road NW, Washington, DC 20016

Federation of Protestant Churches in the German Democratic Republic (East Germany)

From "Declaration on the Current World Political Situation," 1980:

As a communion of churches which serves on the boundary between the two great power blocs in the heart of Europe, the Federation repeats and reinforces its conviction (stated many times in recent years) that for the sake of world peace there is no reasonable alternative to the policy of detente.

The arms race has clearly continued to escalate in the last few months, in spite of the declared political will for arms limitation and disarmament. Never before has it so threatened the European continent. The deployment of theatre nuclear weapons in Europe is both an indication of this movement and an expansion of it . . . The chances for political solution of conflicts according to detente diminish to the extent that the possibilities of "limited" nuclear war increase.

. . . Political detente has not yet been achieved. It is hindered whenever military action takes place of political action. When this happens, it seriously reduces capability to find detente-oriented political solutions of international conflicts. . .

The most recent international development has seriously endangered those results of the process of detente which have already been achieved. Therefore, especially now, those policies must retain priority which are committed to the goals of disarmament and to continuing the process of detente. We must encourage persons with political responsibility to take all available steps in this direction and to refrain from all that which destroys trust. Signs and gestures of trust and of willingness to seek understanding will even yet have a stabilizing effect on the international situation. Being open about one's motivations and goals can reduce insecurity and fears. For the sake of peace among nations the goal of a disarmed world must continue to determine the thought and action of the politicians.

The churches' work for peace can no longer be understood and practiced as an occasional task. Rather, it must be understood and practiced as one of the most important challenges to the churches' witness and service. Our contribution will consist concretely of our making paths visible which the Gospel opens and which are often forgotten in political action. We are thinking:

- of forgiveness, which makes possible one's first steps even when they carry a risk;
- of the privilege of encouraging others to a lack of prejudice, to openness, trust, and sobriety in negotiations and conversations without worrying about ourselves;

- of the reminder given in God's Work to view ourselves, the Church, and even our own country critically. We know that no one can be completely perfect or completely guilty;
- of prayer, which in the midst of all our activities, gives the final decision to God.

Fellowship of Reconciliation

*Statement to the Preparatory Committee for the
United Nations Special Session on Disarmament, 1978:*

Since its founding in 1915, the Fellowship of Reconciliation has unequivocally opposed all war as a means of solving conflict. We recognize that our position seems unrealistic and even dangerous to millions of people and to their governments. But we ask the members of the Preparatory Committee what policies are more extreme or dangerous to the welfare of humankind than are those of our political "realists"? We must raise the question with utmost urgency: are nuclear arsenals poised to destroy entire civilizations realistic methods of keeping us from harm? Even the major participants in humankind's spiraling nuclear arms race recognize the appalling insecurity that accompanies the accumulation of national arsenals measured in multiples of global overkill.

Thousands of negotiating sessions between the nuclear powers and years of bargaining have not destroyed a single nuclear warhead or slowed the race to mutual destruction. We believe that this ineffectiveness stems from the separation of moral imperatives from political behavior. The Fellowship of Reconciliation believes that political rationality and morality, reality and truth, ultimately are one. War and preparation for war must be judged in moral perspective, perspective derived from centuries of collective experience and expressed in our great religious traditions. These traditions agree with striking similarity and clarity that we must neither contemplate nor prepare for the killing of innocent persons. The killing of innocent people is an inevitable characteristic of warfare. The rejection of war is the conclusion of morality seriously applied to politics. Increasingly, it is evident that our generation has arrived at a turning point. Will we indeed fulfill the theory that our species is fatally flawed because it is incapable of controlling its aggressive tendencies and is, therefore, destined for extinction or will we move in a fresh direction toward a disarmed world? The Fellowship of Reconciliation believes that we yet have time to turn our tremendous potential for destruction into a potential for creative cooperation.

Many initiatives have been suggested by other non-governmental organizations. Among these are:

- Public verifiable reduction in military budgets;
- A comprehensive test ban;

- A freeze on the production and distribution of fissionable materials;
- A ban on international arms sales.

We support these initiatives, and we urge that they be adopted and that machinery be set up to insure and monitor compliance by national governments. Such steps though minimal, are important in setting the stage for general and complete disarmament. Without such beginnings, we may have no future at all in which to solve other problems.

The Fellowship of Reconciliation cautions that even if the U.N. Special Session on Disarmament succeeds in removing nuclear weapons from us, a just peace might still remain distant. We petition the Preparatory Committee, therefore: to call for machinery to bring about reductions and eventual elimination of conventional weaponry among nation-states; to prohibit immediately specific weapons which most indiscriminately plague our lives with insecurity; and to encourage unilateral disarmament on the part of already overarmed nations.

In an era characterized by international anarchy, suspicion, worst-possible-case reasoning, and the institutionalization of violence, the Fellowship of Reconciliation petitions the Preparatory Committee to call the member states of the United Nations to initiate, unilaterally when necessary, steps toward general and complete disarmament. We call upon governments to accept risks of peace rather than to impose upon us and our children the certainties that grow out of massive preparations for war. We call for the personal morality and the transnational machinery that will ensure the enhancement of the most fundamental of all human rights — the right to life itself.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Fellowship of Reconciliation, Box 271, Nyack, NY 10960

Greek Orthodox Church

"Statement on Peace and Disarmament," 1978:

To President Carter and Secretary Breshnev:

We, the delegates to the twenty-fourth Clergy-Laity Congress of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America, because of our grave concern for the escalating arms race and the threat which it poses to the peace of the world, hereby declare:

Peace is the goal and hope of all mankind.

But peace, to be a real and lasting peace, must be a peace based on mutual cooperation, not on blind trust.

Disarmament must be achieved in such a manner that all mankind will be served, not so that humanity will be at the mercy of any powerful nation or nations.

If we are to insure that the military tragedies of the past are not to be repeated, it is vital that all efforts be made to de-escalate the arms race. We must achieve an equitable formula for peace which will serve the genuine needs and aspirations of people everywhere who seek the right to live without the spectre of war hovering over their lives and those of their loved ones.

Jewish Organizations

CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS

*Resolution on the Neutron Bomb,
adopted at the 89th Annual Convention, 1978:*

The prophetic imperative to bring about the day when "nation shall not lift up sword against nation" compels us to be alarmed over the development of nuclear weapons which would destroy people while preserving property intact. We endorse the efforts to postpone the development of the Neutron Bomb and commend President Carter for his courageous efforts in this regard.

UNION OF AMERICAN HEBREW CONGREGATIONS

*Statement adopted by the General Assembly
of the American Hebrew Congregations, 1979:*

In conformity with past resolutions calling for disarmament and responsible arms control, and in keeping with the commandment to "seek peace and pursue it," the General Assembly of the UAHC supports ratification of the SALT II treaty.

The ongoing SALT process offers the most realistic possibility presently available for checking a wasteful and potentially catastrophic nuclear arms race. We recognize that this process is not an end and it is our sincere hope that future SALT agreements will significantly reduce armament levels, thus making more resources available for human and social benefits.

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly, 1969:

We urge upon this country and all nations engaged in the armaments race a cessation in the development of ever deadlier weapons systems, such as the ABM and MIRV and their Soviet counterparts, which tend to escalate the international arms race and to cancel each other out at higher levels of cost and danger as they proliferate.

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly, 1963:

As religionists we are obliged to look squarely at the fact that the possibility of thermonuclear holocaust introduces an entirely new quantitative dimension into human affairs. It is our obligation not only to confront this fact ourselves, but to seek to make men everywhere aware of it . . . The United States is now the most powerful nation in the history of the world but, like all men everywhere in our tormented time, we live in mounting and fearful anxiety. We realize that ultimate security can be found only in genuine peace.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Jewish Peace Fellowship, Box 271, Nyack, NY 10960
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
838 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10021

Lutheran Church in America

From "Social Statement on World Community," adopted in 1970:

It is clearly time for a rethinking of the meaning of national security. In view of the overkill capacity now possessed by the superpowers, national security can no longer be defined in terms of either nuclear superiority or even nuclear stalemate. The common threat which such weapons hold for all mankind teaches that their continued development can only undermine security. It is now necessary both to create an international legal framework within which arms control can be brought about and to help nations perceive that their safety must be conceived in more than military terms.

A beginning has been made in the construction of the legal framework. This effort should be intensified, should include all weapons of mass destruction. In the meantime, the United States should be encouraged to undertake such *unilateral initiatives* as may contribute to a climate more hospitable to the limitation of arms.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Lutheran Peace Fellowship, John Backe, Coordinator,
168 West 100th Street, New York, NY 10025

Mennonites

*From Mennonite Church General Assembly
statement on militarism and conscription, 1979:*

We, the delegates of the Mennonite Church, General Assembly, meeting in Waterloo, Ontario, August 11-16, 1979, are gathered at a time of expanding militarism and escalation of the worldwide arms race. Despite efforts by world leaders to agree on strategic arms limitations, the powers of the world continue in their development of increasingly destructive weapons and their probable readiness to use them.

The Bible teaches that governments derive their proper authority from God. We commend governments in their many humanitarian efforts to promote freedom, justice, and well-being. As Mennonites in North America we acknowledge with particular appreciation the freedom of conscience granted by the Canadian and United States governments to groups with special convictions such as ours. We believe that when governments promote such freedoms, pursue justice, and allow a climate in which God's work can flourish, they are doing what God ordained them to do.

Modern militarism, however, tempts the nation to assume the power of God. With their devastating arsenals of nuclear weapons nations today hold destructive power over every living cell on earth. Even without a war the arms race diverts resources from urgent needs, destroys community, and devastates the human spirit. In the United States the militaristic mood is evident in a renewed willingness to conscript young people, possibly women as well as men, for military service. In such times the church must give prophetic warning, calling its members and all people to trust the God who is Sovereign, rather than the gods of war and military technology.

From "Resolution on the World Arms Race," adopted by Peace Section [U.S.], Mennonite Central Committee, 1978:

The world arms race threatens the human race with virtual extinction. The military planners premeditate the killing of millions of people with conventional and nuclear weapons. The church has a duty to say, with all the conviction and commitment which it possesses, that this is wrong.

The Mennonite and Brethren in Christ Churches believe that God wills abundant life for all . . .

The obsession with "national security" through military might, especially evidenced by the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., has ironically served only to increase insecurity. The more U.S. financial and natural resources are exploited for military expansion, the more national strength is

undermined. As America's capability to destroy the "enemy" is multiplied, the adversary responds by increasing capacity to retaliate. The sickness of militarism infects the globe. The U.S., as exporter of nearly half of all international arms exports, has been the major actor in the ever-expanding acquisition and use of armaments. Overkill is a universal condition.

Today, Mennonites in the United States are being challenged once again to declare a peace testimony. There is no military conscription at the present time in our country. Consequently the world and Christians of other denominations no longer hear us saying that war is wrong by our refusal to do military service. At the same time we are deeply involved in some of the things which are secured by the arms race, according to those who define its purpose. These include business opportunities, consumer goods, the imported wealth of other nations and religious freedom. We cannot accept the convenience of these benefits without accepting some responsibility for the war system which makes them possible. As a result, our failure to condemn the arms race as sin leaves us essentially conformed to the world on the most urgent public issue of our time, and our call to others to follow Jesus has a hollow ring which they cannot help but notice.

. . . In every age God's people have identified sin and called its servants to repentance. Now it is our turn. It is not good enough to condemn only the sins which everyone agrees are evil and uncivil. We will have to see the idolatry of our time and identify the false god of nuclear weaponry. To topple this idol may leave our neighbors, both within and without the church feeling momentarily insecure and afraid. But with the death grip of a false security weakened, they may find true hope in the Giver of Life.

From this perspective we make the following affirmations:

1. We believe that the concept of nuclear deterrence, which involves a trust in nuclear weapons, is a form of idolatry.
2. We call upon all people and nations to renounce the research, development, testing, production, deployment and actual use of nuclear weapons, and commit ourselves to resist these activities in the United States. We call for the conversion of jobs in science and industry from warmaking to peacemaking purposes.
3. We identify consumerism, excessive patriotism and fear as major reasons for support of the arms race in American Society. We call upon Mennonite and Brethren in Christ congregations to discern the evidence of these transgressions in their midst and to lead believers into an alternative experience of simplicity, community and faith in the body of Christ.
4. We object to the expenditure of vast amounts of human and economic resources for conventional and nuclear weapons production, and specifically the profligate spending of federal tax monies in this deadly enterprise. We support those who resist the payment of taxes for military purposes and call upon all members of the church to seriously consider refusing the military portion of their federal taxes.

5. We acknowledge that the poor of the world, the victims of injustice and oppression, have a greater claim on our money than does the arms race. We are committed to finding ways to give our resources to the poor and to withhold them from the arms race.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Peace Section (U.S.), Mennonite Central Committee,
21 South 12th Street, Akron, PA 17501

National Council of Churches

*Resolution on a Nuclear Weapons Freeze,
adopted by the N.C.C. Governing Board, 1981:*

WHEREAS, The Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) between the Soviet Union and the United States are in abeyance as a result of events of the last two years; and

WHEREAS, heightened international tension is leading to sharp increases in the armament program of the Soviet Union and the United States as well as other nations with a consequent increase in the danger of war; and

WHEREAS, the National Council of Churches has long held that all the earth's resources are gifts of God, the Lord of Creation, and that men and women have a responsibility to preserve and enhance the created order, not to abuse and destroy it; and

WHEREAS, the National Council of Churches has consistently stressed the value of human life and God's activity in creation through the reconciling act in Christ whereby we are called to be agents of reconciliation; and

WHEREAS, representatives of the Orthodox and Protestant Churches, in a joint statement on March 27-29, 1979, entitled "Choose Life" "confessed that true security can be found only in relationships of trust;"

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Governing Board of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.:

1. Urges both the United States and the Soviet Union to halt the nuclear arms race now by adopting promptly a mutual freeze on all further testing, production, and deployment of weapons and aircraft designed primarily to deliver nuclear weapons;
2. Until such time as a nuclear freeze by the United States and the Soviet Union may be agreed upon, supports initiatives by either or both that would demonstrate good faith and make it easier for the other to take similar steps; and
3. Encourages all program units of the National Council of Churches to examine their responsibilities and opportunities in

- providing educational materials and other resources regarding the nuclear freeze to constituent communions; and
4. Calls upon affiliated denominations, their judicatories and congregations and related councils of churches to consider supporting this call for a nuclear freeze by:
 - a. Making available to their membership speeches, printed resources, and audio-visual materials about the reasons for and importance of such a freeze;
 - b. Supporting financially and by direct involvement the movement for a nuclear freeze;
 - c. Calling upon their senators and representatives to provide congressional support for implementing such a freeze; and
 - d. Urging the President and the Department of State to pursue initiatives leading toward a mutual freeze on the testing, production, and deployment of all nuclear weapons and delivery vehicles.

Netherlands Reformed Church (Holland)

Since it has proven to be impossible to achieve such steps through bi- or multi-lateral agreements, they must now be set unilaterally. They must be unambiguous in their intention. They must not only give direction. They must also bear witness of the readiness to go into this direction. As we relate these considerations to our own responsibility in our own society, we conclude that denuclearization of the Netherlands will be such an unambiguous step. We call for support of this proposal.

New Call to Peacemaking

*From statement of the Findings Committee, New Call to Peacemaking
Second National Conference, 1980:*

INSECURITY THROUGH ARMS

Biblical imperatives call us to flee to our idolatrous sense of security in the arms race, our profiteering in weapons of death, and our infatuation with violence, and to become alive to the good news of peace, the ministry of reconciliation, the way of suffering love, and resurrection faith in the Kingdom coming. We urge responsibility to this call by:

*Seeking the mind of Christ and the biblical basis for peacemaking to discover our positive vision of security.

*Examining our economic life and determining whether our work, our possessions, and our investments have within them the seeds of war.

*Encouraging and supporting those who are examining and questioning their role in the research, development and production of armaments.

*Encouraging our members to study and use materials regarding the economic forces contributing to the arms race and possibilities for conversion to a peacetime economy.

The nations' faith in military power demands the sacrifice of our youth and of our material resources to a false god. This dependence on armed might creates the need to levy war taxes and to recruit and conscript large armies. To prevent this prostitution of human and material resources we must oppose the increasing militarization of our nation. Therefore we reaffirm our commitment to the goals of worldwide abolition of nuclear weapons, general disarmament, and to an end to all warmaking. We urge our meetings and congregations to say clearly to the powers that we are a people who believe there is no security in arms, and therefore, we support unilateral initiatives toward disarmament and active involvement with other nations toward multilateral reduction of arms.

*In particular, we urge active support for a moratorium on the production, testing, and deployment of further weapons by joining Sojourners, the Fellowship of Reconciliation, World Peacemakers, Pax Christi, and others in a ecumenical effort to mobilize congregational support for a U.S.-initiated nuclear weapons moratorium.

*To encourage rapid implementation of such a moratorium, we urge both the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. to demonstrate their sincerity by initiating a unilateral freeze on the production, testing, and deployment of specific weapons systems.

*Resolution of conflict and reconciliation require mutual understanding. Therefore, we urge greater interchange between people of the U.S. and the U.S.S.R., and other nations, through exchanges of delegations initiated and hosted by the Historic Peace Churches.

*To explore and promote nonviolent alternatives to conflict, we urge support for a National Peace Academy.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

New Call to Peacemaking, Box 1245, Elkhart, IN, 46515

Presbyterian Church in the United States

*From "Resolution on Nuclear Weapons and Disarmament,"
adopted 1978:*

WHEREAS, the world is spending an estimated \$400 billion annually on an unresolved arms race; and

WHEREAS, nuclear weapons pose an increasing threat of utter destruction if ever used, and the spread of nuclear weapons beyond the nations now known to have them is almost a certainty unless there is a reversal in the nuclear weapons competition; and

WHEREAS, President Carter, in his inaugural address on January 20, 1977, expressed the conviction that "the ultimate goal of this nation should be the reduction of nuclear weapons in all nations of the world to zero"; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly of the United Nations is now meeting in a Special Session on Disarmament (May 23-June 28, 1978);

THEREFORE, the 118th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States:

- A. Reiterates its conviction that multilateral and comprehensive disarmament is the goal toward which the United States should strive;
- B. Supports a halt in further production of nuclear weapons multilaterally and a rollback of existing nuclear weapons;
- C. Urges the United States government to continue to work for major strategic arms reduction through negotiation;
- D. Again urges the United States government to continue to work for a multilateral agreement to halt all nuclear tests; . . .
- E. Calls upon our members, in the light of our Christian vocation as peacemakers, to confess that we Christians in the United States have not been serious enough in our work for disarmament. We seek the help of Jesus Christ and call upon him for guidance that in all our congregations and program agencies we may commit ourselves anew to the Biblical vision of *shalom* by allocating more human and financial resources for education and action on the disarmament agenda;
- F. Requests that the General Assembly Mission Board give leadership to our churches in educational efforts designed to increase awareness among our church members on the dangers of the continued arms race.

In response to the declaration "Choose Life" . . . The 119th General Assembly adopted the following statement: . . .

That this General Assembly communicate to the President of the United States and to each United States Senator our respectful urging that they be guided only by the aggressive and forthright pursuit of peace in the handling of the SALT II treaty. We urge on our great nation, in the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ, a prudent willingness to risk in the quest for a reduction of arms, and we urge a rejection of any competitive quest for national superiority as an extension beyond the nation's reasonable defense. We assure these elected officials of our prayers for them in the pursuit of a just peace, and the consequent glorious opportunity to redirect resources from arms to the nurture and feeding of the hungry.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Office of Corporate Witness in Public Affairs, Division of
Corporate and Social Mission, General Assembly Mission
Board, Presbyterian Church in the U.S., 341 Ponce de Leon
Avenue NE, Atlanta, GA 30308

Southern Presbyterian Peace Fellowship, c/o Genevieve Yancy,
Chairperson, 1808 Stokes Lane, Nashville, TN 37215

Reformed Church in America

*From "Christian Faith and the Nuclear Arms Race:
A Reformed Perspective," A Theological Commission study recommend-
ed for distribution to the churches by the General Synod, 1980:*

God is the ultimate subject of theological reflection. The nuclear arms race may well be regarded as the penultimate subject of our time. There is no greater affront to the Lord and Giver of life, no more convincing evidence of human enslavement to the dark powers of this age, and no more urgent cause for the church's prophetic witness and action. . .

The General Synod of 1979 accepted eight specific recommendations which constituted a "Call to Action" concerning the nuclear arms race and disarmament. We note especially the second and sixth of those recommendations:

- to call for a full and general prohibition of: nuclear arms testing; development and deployment of new nuclear weapon systems; production and accumulation of chemical and radiological arms as well as other weapons of mass destruction;
- to urge our churches in their teaching and preaching to emphasize the biblical vision of peace and to stress the devastating social and personal consequences of the arms race.

. . . The nuclear arms race is first and foremost a false religion. It is, to be sure, also bad politics, bad economics, bad science, and bad war. It can and should be opposed on all these fronts. To confront the motivating power of the arms race, however, to confront its vital nerve, the church must come to understand it theologically. Only with a biblical discernment can we unmask this threat to life, expose its evil nature, and name its many names.

From "Christian Imperatives for Peacemaking," a statement approved by the General Synod, 1981:

The ominous threat of militarism demands that Christians prepare themselves intellectually and spiritually to fill the role of peacemakers in

a sinful world. The secular world teaches that our primary security against that which threatens us is to be found in ever-increasing military might. We cannot deny that there are many forces threatening the *shalom* (peace and justice) of people around the world. It is the responsibility of those who would be called peacemakers after the style of Jesus Christ to develop the critical capacities and spiritual roots that allow them to question both the sanity of the arms race and its consistency with biblical values. . .

The General Synod of the Reformed Church of America has several times voiced its concern about the arms race and the growing militarism in the world. In response to these concerns, the Christian Action Commission calls upon the General Synod:

- to urge each congregation to engage in a serious study of the meaning of Christian peacemaking in today's world.
- to urge each congregation to be diligent in corporate and individual prayer for peace.
- to urge each congregation and individual member to engage in acts of Christian peacemaking as the Spirit leads them, and to support one another in this witness.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Office of Social Witness, Reformed Church in America, 18th Floor,
475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10015

Representatives of Churches in the U.S.S.R and the U.S.A.

From "Christ is Our Peace," joint communique released by Metropolitan Juvenaly (Russian Orthodox Church) and Dr. Claire Randall (National Council of Churches General Secretary), 1980:

Once again we have seen clearly the dread possibility of a nuclear warfare in our time. We confess that the inadequacy of our peacemaking efforts may have aggravated this extreme threat to the whole of humanity.

We have agreed that the USSR and the USA, the strongest nuclear powers in the world, are under an urgent moral imperative to take immediate initiatives toward disarmament, including a coordinated step by step reduction of nuclear arms. We are convinced that our two countries must move toward disarmament in concert with one another and in relation to treaties that reflect a strong component of trust.

It is also imperative for the USSR and the USA to make substantial progress toward nuclear disarmament in order to strengthen the

non-proliferation system and help prevent proliferation to several nations now on the nuclear threshold. We remind our own countries that more than one hundred nations have renounced nuclear weapons in accordance with the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

We pray for the day when the resources of technology and the extravagance of military spending will be redirected to the economic and social needs of developing countries and of our own societies.

From "Choose Life," 1979:

We make this appeal as servants of Christ gathered from among the churches of the USA and the USSR. We have been drawn together across the differences of language and culture by our common Christian calling to choose life in the midst of a race towards death. We affirm our unity in confessing Christ as Lord and Savior. . .

We are convinced that the arms race cannot be won; it can only be lost. All of us have long been aware of the nuclear terror. Many people have accepted it as an inescapable part of our contemporary world. Numerous voices in the church have been raised against it in both our countries. Our experience in this consultation now compels us to cry out against it with one voice. The existence of forces having the capacity to devastate our planet not once or twice, but many times, is absurd and cannot be tolerated. It must be confronted and overcome in the name of the Christ who lives and reigns forever.

We express profound concern about the danger of a precarious balancing of humanity on the brink of nuclear catastrophe. We know that still more terrible weapons are being developed which can only lead to greater fear and suspicion and thus to a still more feverish arms race. Against this we say with one voice — NO! In the name of God, NO!. . .

Thus the Lord has set before us again life and death, blessing and curse: Therefore, choose life that you and your descendants may live.

Roman Catholic Church

From "Pacem in Terris," encyclical letter of Pope John XXIII, 1963:

Justice, then, right reason, and consideration for human dignity urgently demand that the arms race should cease, that the stockpiles which exist in various countries should be reduced equally and simultaneously by the parties concerned, that nuclear weapons should be banned, and finally that all come to an agreement on a fitting program of disarmament, employing mutual and effective controls. (112)

In an age such as ours which prides itself on its atomic energy it is contrary to reason to hold that war is now a suitable way to restore rights which have been violated. (127)

From "The Constitution on the Church in the Modern World," document of the Second Vatican Council, 1965:

Any act of war aimed indiscriminately at the destruction of entire cities or of extensive areas along with their population is a crime against God and man himself. It merits unequivocal and unhesitating condemnation. (80)

Whatever may be the case with the method of deterrence, men should be convinced that the arms race in which so many countries are engaged is not a safe way to preserve a steady peace. (81)

From the "Statement of the Holy See to the United Nations on Disarmament," 1976:

THE ARMAMENTS RACE

It is to be condemned unreservedly.

Even when motivated by a concern for legitimate defense, it is in fact, by virtue of the nature of modern weapons and the situation prevailing on our planet (paralysis of the nuclear powers: any major conflict being excluded from their mutual relations, while limited ones proliferate outside the area of nuclear stability):

1. *A danger*, in terms of the possible total or partial use of these weapons or the threat thereof, with deterrence, carried to the point of blackmail, accepted as the norm in relation with other nations.
2. *An injustice*. For it constitutes:
 - (a) *A violation of law* by asserting the primacy of force: the accumulation of weapons becomes the pretext for the race for power.
 - (b) *A form of theft*. The massive budgets allocated to the manufacture and stockpiling of weapons is tantamount to misappropriation of funds by the "managers" of the large nations or favored blocs.

The obvious contradiction between the waste involved in the overproduction of military devices and the extent of unsatisfied vital needs (developing countries and the marginal and poor elements in rich countries) *is in itself an act of aggression* against those who are victims of it. It is an act of aggression which amounts to a crime, for *even when they are not used*, by their costs alone *armaments kill the poor by causing them to starve. . .*

3. *Folly*: This system of international relations based on fear, danger, and injustice is a kind of collective hysteria, a folly that will be judged by history. It is meaningless because *it is a means which does not justify its end. The armaments race does not ensure security.*

In any case, whether it is a matter of nuclear weapons or traditional weapons, of great or small powers, *the armaments race has become a*

cumulative process, which has its own dynamics, independent of any aggressive feelings, and which escapes the control of States. It is a machine gone mad.

*From "Human Life in Our Day,"
pastoral letter of the American Bishops, 1968:*

We seriously question whether the present policy of maintaining nuclear superiority is meaningful for security. There is no advantage to be gained by nuclear superiority, however it is computed, when each side is admittedly capable of inflicting overwhelming damage on the other even after being attacked first. Such effective parity has been operative for some years. Any effort to achieve superiority only leads to ever-higher levels of armaments as it forces the side with the lesser capability to seek to maintain its superiority. In the wake of this action-reaction phenomenon comes a decrease in both stability and security. (113)

*From "To Live in Christ Jesus," pastoral statement
of the National Council of Catholic Bishops, 1976:*

The right of legitimate defense is not a moral justification for unleashing every form of destruction. For example, acts of war deliberately directed against innocent noncombatants are gravely wrong, and no one may participate in such an act.

With respect to nuclear weapons, at least those with massive destructive capacity, the first imperative is to prevent their use. As possessors of a vast nuclear arsenal, we must also be aware that not only is it wrong to attack civilian populations but it is also wrong to threaten to attack them as part of a strategy of deterrence. We urge the continued development and implementation of policies which seek to bring these weapons more securely under control, progressively reduce their presence in the world, and ultimately remove them entirely.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Office of International Justice and Peace, United States Catholic
Conference, 1312 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington,
DC 20005

Catholic Peace Fellowship, 339 Lafayette Street, New York,
NY 10012

Pax Christi USA, 3000 North Mango Avenue, Chicago, IL 60634

Society of Friends (Quakers)

*Statement approved at a called meeting at
Friends General Conference, 1981:*

**From: Members of the Religious Society of Friends General Conference,
1981**

To: Ronald Reagan, President of the United States, and Leonid Brezhnev,
Premier of the Soviet Union

For the foreseeable future, each one of us lives under the threat of nuclear destruction.

With the development of new weapons systems and the vast stockpiling of nuclear materials, there is the distinct possibility that within the next decade a nuclear holocaust will occur.

Therefore, Friends (Quakers) gathered together at Friends General Conference in Berea, Kentucky, in 1981, appeal to you in reverence for life and in hope of peace in the world. We request both of you to take immediate steps to initiate a bi-lateral freeze of the development, production, and deployment of all nuclear weapons. We especially urge the renunciation of first use of nuclear weapons. We also ask you to give positive consideration to the proposal by George Kennan for an immediate fifty percent reduction in nuclear arms. We believe that all nuclear weapons must be eliminated, and that these are practical, positive, and safe steps to take towards this goal.

From "Statement of Legislative Policy," approved by Friends Committee on National Legislation's Annual Meeting, 1977:

We approve worldwide disarmament supported by political settlements under world law; we also believe that unilateral disarmament by the United States together with other far-reaching revisions of its foreign policy is required by Christian principles and would encourage other nations to disarm. We are prepared to take the risks of such a course, believing they are at least no greater than those involved in the current nuclear arms race and are infinitely more worth taking.

The United States should take the following *unilateral initiatives*, both to assert their own validity and to challenge other powers to reciprocate in the search for world peace:

- end nuclear weapons production and testing and reduce nuclear stockpiles;
- stop supplying arms to other countries; . . .

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Friends General Conference, 1520-Race Street, Philadelphia,
PA 19102

Friends Committee on National Legislation, 245 Second Street NE,
Washington, DC 20002

American Friends Service Committee, 1501 Cherry Street,
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Quaker Peace Fellowship, Box 271, Nyack, NY 10960

Southern Baptist Convention

"Resolution on Multilateral Arms Control," adopted 1978:

WHEREAS, Southern Baptist Convention has historically passed numerous resolutions calling for peace, and

WHEREAS, That we confess that we have not pursued peace with full Christian commitment, and we commit ourselves to pray for peace in our churches and to seek to become more committed to peacemaking in varieties of ways,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that we support the continued efforts of our national leaders to achieve strategic arms limitations, and that we acknowledge the complexities of maintaining adequate military strength in a divided world and at the same time pressing for peace and freedom from the threat of nuclear holocaust, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we urge our representatives in Washington to move in imaginative and reconciling ways to seek mutual agreements with other nations to slow the nuclear arms race; and that we individually seek to communicate our commitment on this issue to our representatives.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that we urge our own nation and the other nations of the world to shift funds from nuclear weapons systems to basic human needs, such as education, medicine, and relief from hunger.

"Resolution on Peacemaking," adopted 1979:

WHEREAS, in the great Judeo-Christian tradition there is the ancient prophet's vision of world peace, of beating swords into plowshares and spears into pruninghooks, and

WHEREAS, Our Savior Jesus Christ is called the Prince of Peace and is the key to the prophetic vision of peace, and

WHEREAS, The Bible teaches that Christians are to be peacemakers and are to "Follow after the things which make for peace" (Romans 14:19), and

WHEREAS, The Southern Baptist Convention in 1978 voted its conviction that multilateral nuclear arms control is an essential ingredient in peacemaking, and

WHEREAS, The current Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty appears to be a responsible step in the direction of checking nuclear arms proliferation without which an arms race of unparalleled dimensions would seem certain to occur, thus bringing our world closer to the brink of nuclear holocaust,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that we communicate with the members of the United States Senate our strong support for multilateral nuclear arms control and urge ratification of the current treaty as basically a step in the direction of multilateral arms control, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we communicate to our elected representatives our concern that in the future greater strides in multilateral arms reduction be taken, and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we commit ourselves to support nuclear arms control with prayer and with an educational emphasis among Southern Baptists which will seek to clarify the moral dimensions of this important world issue and to support the vital Christian ministry of peacemaking.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

Southern Baptist Convention, 460 James Robertson Parkway,
Nashville, TN 37219

Baptist Peacemaker, Deer Park Baptist Church, 1733 Bardstown
Road, Louisville, KY 40205

United Church of Christ

*From "Reversing the Arms Race," a Pronouncement
of the 12 General Synod, 1979*

We as Christians affirm our faith that:

God's will and way for the whole human family are shown in Scripture, tradition, and right reason; that as covenanted people of God, we are called by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ to a ministry of reconciliation, "For he is our peace who has made us one" (Ephesians 2);

As we say in our Statement of Faith, God calls us to be "Servants in the service of others" and "to proclaim the good news to all the world and resist the powers of evil"; and

"God bestows upon us the Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the Church of Jesus Christ" and "promises to all who trust . . . courage in the struggle for justice and peace" and "the presence of the Holy Spirit in trial and rejoicing." We as concerned citizens recognize:

There is a threat to the whole human family, in the spreading danger of nuclear war, and as Christians we have a particular responsibility to resist this power of evil;

Our government uses our taxes to accumulate a stockpile of nuclear weapons with a firepower equivalent to more than 600,000 Hiroshima bombs, enough to destroy every major city in the world, and has deployed them ready to strike anywhere on the globe;

Billions are being spent for arms, while people's basic needs, such as food, housing, health care and education are underfunded, that to be able to kill and to be killed many times over in the name of defense is an evil waste of world resources;

There can be no security in arms alone and there can be no sure

defense in the event of a nuclear strike and its inevitable retaliation; that millions of men, women, and children will perish; that the export of nuclear technology increases the likelihood of weapons proliferation and the dangers that human fallibility can cause fatal accidents, affecting all people;

Massive arms sales increase the threat of war;

Behind the weapons are personnel, and there is mounting pressure to reinstate a Selective Service registration, and yet the "only justification for military conscription is an emergency that requires the exceptional mobilization of the nation's resources and manpower. . ." (from General Synod VII)

It is still possible for our government to take the lead in turning nations toward reversing the arms race by:

- placing priority on reversing the arms race in funding, in political strategy at home and abroad, and in the education of our people;
- taking independent initiatives toward disarmament and challenging other nations to do the same;
- limiting further the sale of weapons and high technology which could be used for military purposes to their nations;
- funding nationwide efforts at conversion from war-time to peace-time economy, thereby decreasing both inflation and unemployment and increasing jobs that serve human needs;
- approving weapons limitation treaties, such as SALT II, that contribute to a lessening of the arms race, to necessary security and to human rights around the world;
- resisting efforts to reinstate a Selective Service registration or draft;
- studying the feasibility of a national center for research and training in peaceful methods of conflict resolution.

"Resolution: Broken Arrow," adopted by the 13th General Synod, 1981:

WHEREAS, Nationalism historically has been a universal passion of people, and patriotism an emotion which can be aroused to war; and WHEREAS, nuclear armaments have been perfected in great number and with such explosive power that nuclear war would mean the end of life as we know it; and

WHEREAS, the money spent for nuclear weapons deprives our world of financial resources for basic human needs; and

WHEREAS, the biblical mandate of the prophets and the gospel of Jesus Christ is the foundation of our faith and action, declared in the Good News, "Blessed are the Peacemakers. . ."

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Thirteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ affirms a commitment to nuclear disarmament through negotiation with all existing and developing nuclear powers, and communicates this commitment to the President of the United States of America, and the Secretaries of State and Defense, through the Office of the President of the United Church of Christ; and BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the United Church of Christ's

President express to national leaders our forthright desire for nuclear disarmament even if this process must begin with unilateral initiative on the part of the United States.

"Peace Priority Goal," as voted by the 13th General Synod, 1981:

To enlist all parts of the church, as witnesses for Christ and humanity, in *study and action*, to the end that:

- the Biblical and theological role of the church and its members as peacemakers be explored and implemented;
- policies and programs be developed to resolve global tensions and create a peaceful world;
- the dependence of the United States and the world economies on the production of armaments be reversed;
- the arms race be reversed;
- the development and use of nuclear and biological weapons be recognized as completely contrary to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Office for Church in Society, United Church of Christ, 105 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016 or 110 Maryland Avenue NE, Washington, DC 20002

United Methodist Church

*From "The United Methodist Church and Peace,"
adopted by the General Conference, 1980:*

Peace is not simply the absence of war, a nuclear stalemate or combination of uneasy cease-fires. It is that emerging dynamic reality envisioned by prophets where spears and swords give way to implements of peace (Isaiah 2:1-4); where historic antagonists dwell together in trust (Isaiah 11:4-11); and where righteousness and justice prevail. There will be no peace with justice until unselfish and informed love are structured into political processes and international arrangements (Bishops' Call for Peace and the Self-Development of Peoples). . .

One hard fact must be stated bluntly: the arms race goes on, the momentum of the race never slackens, and the danger of a holocaust is imminent. Meanwhile, millions starve, development stagnates, and international cooperation is threatened. Increasingly sophisticated weapons systems accelerate arms spending and heighten anxieties without adding to the security of the nations. Again and again, regional tensions grow, conflicts erupt, and great powers intervene to advance or protect their interests without regard to international law or human rights.

True priorities in national budgeting are distorted by present expenditures on weapons. Because of fear of unemployment, profits, and contributions to national balance of payments, the arms industry engenders massive political power. Arms producing nations seek to create markets, then vie with one another to become champion among the arms merchants of the world. Food, health, social services, jobs, and education are vital to the welfare of nations. Yet the availability of all these is constantly threatened because of the overriding priority given by governments to what is called "defense."

If humanity is to move out of this period of futility and constant peril, the search for new weapons systems must be halted through comprehensive international agreements. Moreover, disarmament negotiations should include all nations with substantial armaments systems. The vast stockpiles of nuclear bombs and conventional weapons must be dismantled under international supervision, and the resources being used for arms diverted to programs designed to affirm life rather than destroy it. Serious consideration should be given by nations to unilateral initiative which might stimulate the reaching of international agreement.

Where nations in a specific region band together to bar nuclear weapons from the area as encouraged by the international community, we commend and urge other countries, particularly the great powers, to respect them.

The goal of world disarmament, demanding a radical reordering of priorities and coupled with an effective system of international peacekeeping, must constantly be kept before peoples and governments by the church.

*From "Social Principles, The United Methodist Church,"
adopted by the General Conference, 1980:*

We believe war is incompatible with the teachings and example of Christ. We therefore reject war as an instrument of national foreign policy and insist that the first moral duty of all nations is to resolve by peaceful means every dispute that arises between or among them; that human values must outweigh military claims as governments determine their priorities; that the militarization of society must be challenged and stopped; that the manufacture, sale and deployment of armaments must be reduced and controlled; and that the production, possession, or use of nuclear weapons be condemned.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Board of Church and Society, The United Methodist Church,
100 Maryland Avenue NE, Washington, DC 20002

Methodist Peace Fellowship, c/o Dr. John Swomley, 5123 Truman
Road, Kansas City, MO 64127

The United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

*From "Peacemaking: the Believers' Calling,"
adopted by the General Assembly, 1980:*

Peace is more than the absence of war, more than a precarious balance of powers. Peace is the intended order of the world with life abundant for all God's children. Peacemaking is the calling of the Christian church, for Christ is our peace who has made us one through his body on the cross.

How will peace be achieved? By disarmament? Certainly, but not only by global economic reform. By the change of political structures? Basically, at the heart, it is a matter of the way we see the world through the eyes of Christ. It is a matter of praying and yearning. It is an inner response to God, who loves the whole world and whose Spirit calls for and empowers the making of peace.

With repentance and humility and the power of hope, let us tend to our task.

To that end the 192nd General Assembly (1980) affirms peacemaking as the responsibility of the United Presbyterian Church and declares:

1. *The church is faithful to Christ when it is engaged in peacemaking. . .*
2. *The church is obedient to Christ when it nurtures and equips God's people as peacemakers. . .*
3. *The church bears witness to Christ when it nourishes the moral life of the nation for the sake of peace in the world.* The church's faithful obedience to its calling means active participation in the formation of the values and beliefs of our society. It means seeking peace in the personal and social relationships of our culture and exercising our citizenship in the body politic to shape foreign policy. It is of strategic importance for us to nurture changes in public attitude and to raise public consciousness. . .

Resolution on Nuclear Weapons Freeze, adopted 1981:

The 193rd General Assembly:

1. Endorses the "Call to Halt the Nuclear Arms Race."
2. Directs the Office of the General Assembly to send copies of the "Call to Halt the Nuclear Arms Race" to all ministers, presbyteries, and synods, and five copies to each clerk of session; and to all commissioners of the 193rd General Assembly.
3. Requests the Peacemaking Project of the Program Agency to provide study and interpretive materials on the "Call to Halt the

Nuclear Arms Race," such material to include background packets, speakers, posters, audio-visual aids, and resources for Bible study and worship.

4. Requests congregations, presbyteries, and synods to study the "Call to Halt the Nuclear Arms race" prior to the 194th General Assembly (1982)
6. Directs the Peacemaking Project of the Program Agency to report to the 194th General Assembly (1982) on the actions taken by congregation, presbyteries, and synods; and
7. Sends to the President of the United States, to all members of the Senate and the House of Representatives, and to all appropriate persons in the Russian Orthodox Church copies of the "Call to Halt the Nuclear Arms Race" with a statement of our endorsement of the paper.
8. Sends a protest to the Secretary of the Navy on the naming of the latest nuclear submarine "Corpus Christi" because it is improper and offensive to have a nuclear submarine so named.

From resolution, adopted by the 193rd General Assembly. 1981:

WHEREAS, the church is seeking peace according to Christ's command when it summons the nation to take realistic first steps in reducing the prospect of nuclear war; and

WHEREAS, there is a growing body of Christians in this country, some of whom oppose the use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances while others reluctantly approve their use in response to enemy nuclear attack, but all of whom look upon the idea of their nation's deliberately initiating nuclear war, regarding it as an act of singular and monstrous wickedness; and

WHEREAS, in the opinion of experts a pledge never to make a preemptive strike with nuclear weapons would be an important first step in "delegitimizing" nuclear war, carrying the hope that such a pledge from the United States would lead to a similar one from the Soviet Union, thus opening the way to the establishment of more zones free of nuclear weapons and eventually to the reduction of existing stockpiles of nuclear arms;

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Presbytery of Union request the forthcoming 193rd General Assembly (1981) to petition the President of the United States, the Secretary of State, and the Foreign Relations Committees of the Senate and House of Representatives that our nation make a solemn public commitment never again to be the first to employ nuclear weapons as an instrument of warfare.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Peacemaking Project, United Presbyterian Church in the USA,
475 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10015
United Presbyterian Peace Fellowship, Box 271, Nyack, NY 10960

Unitarian Universalist Association

Resolution on Nuclear Weapons, adopted 1979:

WHEREAS, continued nuclear proliferation increases the danger of accidental nuclear warfare; and

WHEREAS, the stockpiling of nuclear weapons increases the probability of the extinction of ALL life on earth in the event of nuclear war;

BE IT RESOLVED, That the 1979 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association urges the Board of Trustees and Administration of the Unitarian Universalist Association to seek out and cooperate with persons, groups, or associations working together to proscribe the manufacture, stockpiling, and threat of use of nuclear weapons; and

BE IT RESOLVED, That the 1979 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association urges the United States to ratify the SALT II agreement without amendments which might jeopardize the Treaty and the ongoing SALT process; and further calls upon Unitarian Universalists to urge their senators to support SALT II as a small but significant step toward nuclear arms limitation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the General Assembly urges support of a United States moratorium on further production of nuclear weapons.

Resolution on "Nationwide Support of a Local Initiative to Stop the Arms Race," adopted 1981:

WHEREAS, current policies of the governments of both the Soviet Union and the United States accelerate the arms race; and

WHEREAS, the arms race is a major contributor to the economical, social, and political dysfunction of both the Soviet and Western blocks; and

WHEREAS, President Eisenhower once said, "The people want peace so badly that governments ought to get out of their way and let them have it." -- yet only we the people can make peace; and

WHEREAS, the voters of western Massachusetts have shown the way by affirming by a vote of 59% to 41% Proposition 7 on their local ballot calling for a bilateral freeze by the United States and the U.S.S.R. on nuclear weapons production;

BE IT RESOLVED, That the 1981 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association join with the voters of western Massachusetts "in favor of a resolution requesting the President of the United States to propose to the Soviet Union a mutual nuclear weapons moratorium immediately halting the testing, production, and deployment of all nuclear warheads, missiles, and delivery systems, and requesting Congress to transfer the funds that would have been used for those purposes to civilian use;" and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this Assembly urges its member

churches and societies, the Unitarian Universalist Association Office of Social Responsibility, and the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee to join with religious, peace, and civic groups to place the language of Proposition 7 above cited on local and state ballot initiatives and/or petitions to elected officials.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Unitarian Universalist Peace Fellowship, c/o Rev. Farley Wheelwright, President, 12861 Titian, Granada Hills, CA 91344

World Council of Churches

Statement on Nuclear Disarmament, adopted by the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches, 1980:

The Central Committee heard the message from the Melbourne Conference, which spoke of the "Clouds of nuclear threat and annihilation" and that from the Conference on Faith, Science and the Future, which reminded it that the gravest danger that humanity faces today is a nuclear holocaust. It is with great sense of urgency that the Central Committee makes this statement.

Developments in the recent period have brought the world closer to the brink of a nuclear war. Unless the present trends are immediately halted, a nuclear war is now a distinct possibility. Many scientists are convinced that in the past year the hands of the clock have moved closer to the midnight of nuclear war.

The tension between the USA and the USSR has increased. They have each developed and continue to develop now generations of ever-more devastating nuclear weapons. The dangers inherent in the deployment of these weapons within Europe have been heightened by the NATO decision to base new missiles possessing counterforce qualities and exceptional accuracy.

In August, 1980, the United States officially announced a new policy which contemplates a "limited" nuclear war. This has further raised the anxieties about a nuclear holocaust. The current weapon program of the major powers, if not stopped, will pull the nuclear trip-wire tighter. The development of "nuclear war-fighting capabilities" will increase the hair-trigger readiness for massive nuclear exchange at a time when political tensions are increasing all over the world.

Many years ago the USA, the UK and the USSR agreed to negotiate a treaty banning all nuclear tests. Regrettably no draft of such a comprehensive test ban treaty has been presented. Neither China nor France has indicated willingness to enter into such an agreement. The deliberations at the Second Review Conference on Non-Proliferation

Treaty currently being held in Geneva have highlighted the fact that the nuclear weapon states that have signed the treaty have failed to fulfill their obligations under the treaty to start nuclear disarmament, thus undermining the credibility of the non-proliferation regime.

The Central Committee urges all nuclear powers to:

- a) freeze immediately all further testing, production and deployment of nuclear weapons and of missiles and new aircraft designed primarily to deliver nuclear weapons;
- b) start immediately discussions with a view to making agreements not to enhance the existing nuclear potentials and progressively reducing the overall number of nuclear weapons and a speedy conclusion of a comprehensive test ban treaty.

The Central Committee also urges an early ratification of the SALT II agreement.

In view of the possibility of nuclear war, the Central Committee urges the Madrid Conference (on European Security and Cooperation) to decide to start negotiations on nuclear disarmament.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

World Council of Churches, Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, Ninah Koshy, Box 66, 150 Route de Ferney, 1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland

World Council of Churches, U.N. Office, Dwain Epps, 777 U.N. Plaza, New York, NY 10017



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